



Australian Bureau of Statistics

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Median earnings of employees rose by 1.9% in 2017

The median weekly earnings of employees rose by 1.9% from August 2016 to August 2017, according to figures released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). This followed similar annual increases for 2017 seen in the Wage Price Index and Average Weekly Earnings, for which figures for December 2017 and November 2017 were released last week.

Over the year to August 2017, the median weekly earnings of full-time employees rose by 1.5%, while earnings of part-time employees rose by 3.3%.

Program Manager for Labour Statistics at the ABS, Bjorn Jarvis, said "The subdued earnings growth of full-time employees was particularly apparent for casual employees in 2017. The median weekly earnings of male full-time casual employees actually fell by 1% and remained unchanged for female full-time casual employees."

Over the previous five years, 2012 to 2017, the average annual growth of median weekly earnings for male full-time casual employees was 0.8%, down from the 4.1% recorded over the period from 2007 to 2012. In contrast, the average annual growth of median weekly earnings for female full-time casual employees was 2.7%, down slightly from the 3.0% recorded over 2007-2012.

The overall proportion of employees working on a casual basis increased from 23.5% in August 2012 to 25.1% in August 2017. Mr Jarvis noted that "this increase was driven mainly by full-time casual employees, with the overall proportion of full-time casual employees increasing from 10.3% of full-time employees in August 2012 to 11.6% in August 2017. The overall proportion of part-time casual employees reduced from 53.7% of part-time employees in August 2012 to 53.2% in August 2017".

The Characteristics of Employment Survey is run in conjunction with the monthly Labour Force Survey every August, to collect more detailed information on employment arrangements and earnings. Further details can be found in Characteristics of Employment, Australia, August 2017 (cat. no. 6333.0) available for free download from <https://www.abs.gov.au>.

Further insight into the earnings and employment characteristics of casual employees are provided in the feature article 'Using Characteristics of Employment data to inform on recent trends in earnings growth'.

For further information about income and earnings see the Fact Sheet: Income and Earnings, published in the Labour Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods (cat. no. 6102.0.55.001).

Media note:

- “Median” is a statistical term referring to the middle point of a distribution. In the case of earnings, it refers to the earnings of the person in the middle of the distribution, with the same number of people earning more and less than them. Unlike means or simple averages, medians are not skewed by very high and very low earners.
- “Casual employees” are defined in this release as “employees without paid leave entitlements”.
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